

South Carolina Farm Bureau State Legislative Weekly Update January 21, 2022



House Budget Subcommittees March On and Congressional Reapportionment Signed Into Law

House Ways & Means Subcommittee's met throughout the week hearing from numerous state agencies related to their budget requests. These subcommittee meetings provide members the framework to design and create the state's budget. There were a few hearings of agricultural note held this week. Clemson PSA, SC State PSA, SC Governor's School for Agriculture at John De La Howe and SC Forestry Commission all presented their budget requests and answered question surrounding the requests.

Clemson Public Service and Agriculture (PSA) is a state agency comprised of four units: Clemson Experiment Station, Clemson Cooperative Extension, Livestock Poultry Health, and Regulatory Services. Clemson PSA safeguards the health and safety of livestock, poultry and companion animals and protects the food supply and public health of South Carolinians through its Livestock Poultry Health division, while PSA's Regulatory Services division ensures the safe, effective use of fertilizers and pesticides, and the quality of seeds and plants grown in the state and conducts programs that prevent agroterrorism.

Clemson University PSA has requested \$21,766,230 in funding which includes Integrated Agriculture Technology that builds on precision agriculture breakthroughs that will be used in collaboration with major technology companies to help farmers better understand environmental conditions, forecasts and crop management options. PSA has also requested funding to initiate the construction of a new Poultry Science Research Center near Clemson's main campus on the Piedmont Research and Education Center that will provide research, teaching and outreach support to the South Carolina poultry industry that represents 40% of all agriculture in the state, 80% of animal agriculture and accounts for approximately 13,000 jobs. **SC State 1890 Research and Extension** shares the historic mission as one of our nation's land-grant universities to provide education, research and outreach services for the benefit of our

state, nation and larger world. SC State PSA has requested \$10,191,000 in funding which includes the expansion of emerging Agribusiness Programs (Urban Agriculture, Controlled Environment Agriculture and Emerging Research in Alternative Crops).

The SC Governor's School for Agriculture at John de la Howe (JDLH) is a state-funded, public, residential high school focused on delivering a unique and challenging agricultural education program. The school, the first statewide program of its kind in the nation, allows students to receive hands-on training in the fields of agriculture, agribusiness, forestry, land management, food science, and more - all aimed at assessing the needs of modern farms. John De La Howe has requested \$1,200,000 in funding focused on renovating the school's science lab and perimeter security fencing.

The SC Forestry Commission is charged with protecting and enhancing South Carolina's forest resources. Forest firefighters are based in every county for quick response to wildfires, and project foresters are available to assist landowners throughout the state. Three regional dispatch centers coordinate statewide forest protection. The Commission operates five state forests and a modern forest nursery that grows over 17 million containerized and bareroot seedling species for SC landowners. SC Forestry Commission has requested \$7,819,000 in funding to tackle firefighting and service capacity, fire support aircraft and a bridge replacement at Wee Tee State Forest in Georgetown County.

South Carolina Farm Bureau (SCFB) staff will continue to monitor the proposed budget proceedings while advocating for agriculture.

The Senate concluded their debate on congressional reapportionment and the bill that establishes election districts from which the members of the congressional districts are elected, beginning with the 2022 general election. The bill has been signed into law by Governor McMaster.

SCFB Hosts the House Agriculture, Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs Committee

Thanks to the members of the House Agriculture Committee, chaired by Rep. David Hiott (R-Pickens), for joining President Harry Ott, State Legislative Chair Cullen Bryant, members of the SC Cattlemen's Association, and SCFB staff for dinner in Columbia January 26th. Also joined by Speaker Pro Tem of the House, Tommy Pope, this opportunity allowed SCFB to discuss the policies and positions our team is currently advocating before the Committee and House of Representatives.

Introductions this Week

[House Bill 4854](#) is a companion bill, filed by Representative William Cogswell who represents House District 110 in Charleston, to [Senate Bill 961](#) that would exempt beekeepers who file for and obtain an exemption certificate from the Department of Agriculture to sell their product directly to inspected food processing establishments.

A joint resolution, [House Bill 4866](#) sponsored by Representative Bill Chumley who represents House District 35 which includes Greenville and Spartanburg counties, would create a three-year pilot program that establishes rural public school based community canneries. The bill requires the State Board of Education, in conjunction with the Food Systems and Safety Program of the Clemson University Cooperative Extension Service (Clemson Extension Service), to plan, develop, institute, and oversee a pilot program of three rural public school-based community canning sites where members of the general public may bring locally-grown produce to be canned for their personal use. The purpose of this program is to enable families to safely preserve and store food grown by them for personal consumption.

SCFB Farmers of the Week!

The South Carolina Cattlemen's Association

SC Farm Bureau was excited to host the South Carolina Cattleman's Association as our ***SCFB Farmers of the Week*** at the capitol this week. Members of the Association from across the state came to Columbia to share their ranching and farming story with our elected officials and others. Thanks to all that participated!